

Employee disengagement could be strangling prospects for UK OEMs

Today's business environment presents a number of challenges not least customer demand for lower prices, higher quality, innovation and better service. OEMs have responded by operating on slimmer margins, relocating operations overseas and integrating new technologies into their offer. But as they continue to chase smaller and smaller gains from these areas, Employee Engagement - one of the most important drivers of cost, business performance and profit - is often overlooked.

What is Employee Engagement?

Employee Engagement might be a new term to some but every manager will recognise and value the characteristic behaviour. Essentially it represents something employees give freely because they feel they have a personal affinity with the culture, values and goals of the organisation. It is discretionary behaviour that cannot be required as part of an employment contract, it's 'going the extra mile' for the sake of the business.

Engaged employees 30% more productive?

Much has been written recently on the impact of Employee Engagement on the productivity of organisations. A recent Gallup survey suggested only one third of UK employees are actively engaged, with the number in decline!

There is clear evidence that high levels of Employee Engagement drives company performance in areas such as customer retention, turnover, productivity, customer service and loyalty. Also, highly engaged employees are 20-30% more productive than disengaged employees, helping businesses develop and deliver a sustained and significant competitive advantage.

Leadership is key

So what can businesses do to engage their employees? There are many factors that influence engagement, from finding the right person during the selection process to the influence of organisational change on an individual. However, the overriding influence is the quality of management, or leadership, that the individual receives.

Managers need to move away from traditional directive roles and develop a stronger leadership style. They need

to understand that their role is not to drive employees to work harder but to create the conditions under which they will work more efficiently and effectively. Employees need to be more involved and feel more valued if they are to give more.

Understanding how businesses can work smarter and deliver more, without increasing headcount, is a strategic business issue that OEM managers must take seriously if they wish to compete effectively in the future.

What sets a leader apart from a manager?

Find out at www.festo-didactic.co.uk/managerorleader



Don't Just Feed Me Chicken - Engage, Enable and Empower Employees

Working with the Hawk Conservancy Trust, Festo Didactic has developed a unique one day workshop to help managers explore the role of leadership on Employee Engagement. As a charitable trust the Hawk Conservancy depends more upon employees being engaged than many commercial organisations. Delegates work with Trust employees and handle the birds to bring the issues into stark relief. They leave with tools to help assess engagement levels in their company and identify areas of personal leadership strength and potential areas of development.

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 Call 01604 667584